HEALTH
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BRAINTREE & BOCKING URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ACTING MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR

1945.

Public Health Offices
Town Hall.
Braintree.

September, 1946.

Mr.Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you a short Report on the Health and Sanitary Conditions of the Urban District during the year 1945. This report follows the same lines as those submitted during the war, and incorporates the work of the Chief Sanitary Inspector's department.

The general health of the Urban District remained good, and there has been no serious outbreak of Infectious Disease.

GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES.

There were no changes in the general health services provided in the District during the year.

Legislation in Force.

No new byelaws were adopted or came into force during the year.

Staff.

Mr. H Jepson, Additional Sanitary Inspector, resigned his appointment as from January 20th, having secured an appointment with another Authority. Mr. H.Davies of Liverpool, was appointed Additional Sanitary Inspector as from April, 1st,1945.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

Water.

The Notley Road and Bocking Waterworks were again used for supply purposes during the year. The average daily pumping hours are 22. The Chlorination Plant still operates continuously. A scheme is under consideration for augmenting the supply by the sinking of a borehole in the adjoining Rural Area.

Sampling by the Sanitary Inspector provides a monthly analysis of the water supplied to consumers, and a quarterly analysis of the raw supply.

Twenty one samples were taken during the year, nine from Braintree and twelve from Bocking.

Reports were received from the County Bacteriologist as follows:-

Braintree Supply. 20.11.45.

This sample is practically clear and bright in appearance

almost neutral in reaction and free from metals apart from a negligible trace of iron. The water has a very moderate hardness and is normal with respect to its appreciable salinity and content of mineral constituents. It is of satisfactory organic and bacterial purity and in these respects is considered pure and wholesome and suitable for public supply purposes.

Bocking Supply. 2.5.45.

This sample is reasonably clear and bright in appearance, neutral in reaction and free from metals, apart from a negligible trace of iron. The water is hard in character but not to an abnormal degree, has a high but not excessive content of salinity and mineral constituents in solution and is of a high standard of organic and bacterial purity.

These results are consistent with a pure and wholesome water, suitable for public supply purposes.

Drainage and Sewerage.

Braintree Works.

Construction work on the building of the new Supernatant Pump Well is practically completed and delivery is awaited of the pumping machinery.

Bocking Works.

These works continue to produce a satisfactory effluent.

Sanitary Inspection.

During the year, inspections were made as a result of complaints of nuisance and of defects in dwelling houses etc.

Swimming Baths and Pools.

Samples taken from the Council's Swimming Pool and from a privately owned Pool were both reported to be of satisfactory standard of bacterial purity.

HOUSING.

No routine house to house inspections were carried out. Visits upon complaints were made in respect of housing defects.

Owing to the housing shortage 25 houses previously condemned as unfit for habitation are occupied by 72 adults and 27 children.

Milk.

Milk (Special Designations) Order.

Tuberculin Tested,	Licence to bottle.	1
	Dealers' Licences.	6
Pasteurised Milk,	Dealers' Licences.	1

Souring of Milk.

During the year 33 samplee of milk were taken. Most of these samples were taken because of a recurrence of complaints of souring of milk by a wholesale firm outside the Urban District. Similar trouble had been experienced during 1944, as reported in the last Annual Report. On six different occasions between May and September numerous complaints were received. On July 17th a Conference took place of representatives from the Suppliers and the Councils concerned. At this meeting it was arranged that

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because of the age of the milk, pasteurisation should be carried out. In spite of this, further complaints were received in August and September, and samples taken during this period were found to be unsatisfactory and also insufficiently heat treated.

In view of this, the Council, in October, made strong representations to the Ministry of Food as to the quality of milk supplied by this Firm. In November, further complaints were received, due it transpired to the breaking down of the pasteurisation plant. Further representations were addressed to the Ministry of Food with a request that an alternative supply be made available to the local retailers affected. At the close of the year an investigation by an Inspector of the Milk Division of the Ministry of Food was proceeding.

Meat.

The scheme for centralised slaughtering under the Ministry of Food continued during the year. Two slaughterhouses have been used exclusively by the Ministry. The remainder of the privately owned slaughterhouses have not been used. Licensed slaughterhouses in the district number 6, and knackers' yards 1.

During the year, 7,969 animals were slaughtered for human consumption. Of these 7,613 or 95.55% were inspected. The total amount of unsound food condemned during this period was 26.21 tons. In most cases the food was salvaged and used for trade purposes other than for human consumption.

It is unfortunate that it was not possible to attain a 100% inspection of all animals slaughtered during the year. This was due to the department being without the services of an Additional Inspector for three months during the year 1945.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The following cases of Notifiable Infectious Disease have been reported to me during the year:-

Scarlet Fever.	5	Acute Poliomyelitis.	2
Whooping Cough.	4	Erysipelas.	1
Measles.	309	Ophthalmia Neonatorum.	1
Dysentery.	6		

One case of Acute Poliomyelitis proved fatal.

An epidemic of Measles occurred during the months of May and June, chiefly confined to children under the age of 10 years.

Infectious Diseases Hospital.

Owing to the difficulty in maintaining Nursing and Domestic Staff, the Infectious Diseases Hospital, Cressing Road, Braintree, was temporarily closed down in December, 1945. Arrangements were made for cases arising within the District to be treated in the Colchester Borough Isolation Hospital, and for the Braintree Hospital to be reopened at short notice in case of need.

Diphtheria Prophylaxis.

Monthly Sessions continue to be held at the Combined Treatment Centre, Coggeshall Road, Braintree, and are well attended. Since the inception of the scheme in 1940, the total number of children immunised against Diphtheria in the Urban District at the end of 1945 was as follows:-

Children aged 5 - 15 (i.e.school children)	1,522
Children under 5 years (i.e.pre-school children)	829.

These figures represent approximately 74% and 73.4% of the child population in the respective age groups.

Tuberculosis.

The total number of cases on the Tuberculosis Register at the end of the year was 130, and was made up as follows:-

Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
M.	F.	M.	F.
40	34	24	32

New cases notified during the year numbered 32, and were made up as follows:-

Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
M.	F.	M.	F.
6	15	7	4

During the year there were 12 deaths of persons on the Tuberculosis Register.

EVACUATION.

During the year the work of returning evacuees and homeless persons to accommodation in their home areas was continued. In September, due to representations from the owner of the property, the few children remaining at Boleyns Hostel were transferred to other hostels, and the Hostel closed.

I wish to express my thanks to the Council's Officers who have kindly assisted me in compiling this Report.

I am,

Mr.Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

J.W.NICHOLAS.

Acting Medical Officer of Health.